

COMMENDING FIRST RESPONDERS
BATTLING WILDFIRES IN SOUTH-
ERN CALIFORNIA

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mr. DENT. Madam Speaker, I rise to commend the courageous efforts of numerous first responders currently battling wildfires in Southern California. Today, these dangerous fires stretch over more than 400,000 acres and have forced the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of local residents from their homes.

As we've seen on national television, the tragedy unfolding in Southern California is of epic proportions; yet the many first responders charged with saving life and limb have performed magnificently since the initial flames. Taking on these blazes from all angles, firefighters are ensuring the safety of Californians while fighting to protect their property and homes. The courage of these first responders is truly exemplary.

As Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Committee's Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response Subcommittee, I am pleased to see that these brave firefighters, police officers, and paramedics are being aided in their efforts by FEMA, the National Guard, and other elements of the Department of Defense.

Exacerbated by drought conditions and the fierce Santa Ana winds, these fires are some of the most menacing in American history. Like every American, I am thankful for the selfless efforts of all first responders, who perform so bravely in harrowing circumstances, especially those currently battling the wildfires in Southern California.

STATEMENT REGARDING THE
VISIT OF MR. ALEXIS GALANOS,
MAYOR OF FAMAGUSTA, CYPRUS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, as a co-chair and co-founder of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, I want to welcome Mr. Alexis Galanos, mayor of Famagusta, Cyprus, to Washington, DC. Mr. Galanos has an important message to share with those of us in Congress about how his city became a "ghost town" when Cyprus was invaded in 1974 by Turkey. Famagusta is a symbol of a divided Cyprus and a crystallization of the situation there since the invasion.

Famagusta was a thriving port city in Cyprus until 1974. Its industrial sector supplied vital jobs to the nearby population, and it was an important tourist destination. In 1973, 88.9 percent of all imports and 73.6 percent of all exports went through Famagusta.

Tragically, a few short weeks after Turkey invaded Cyprus, Famagusta was bombed relentlessly by Turkish troops. Greek Cypriots fled in terror, and the city was sealed off with barbed wire fences by Turkish forces. Ultimately, 45,000 citizens of Famagusta became refugees in their own country, losing their land, businesses, homes, and neighbors.

As a result of the Turkish invasion and occupation, 160,000 Greek Cypriots, amounting to 70 percent of the population of the occupied area and over a quarter of the total population, were forcibly expelled from their homes and approximately 5,000 Cypriots were killed. More than 1,400 Greek Cypriots, including four Americans of Cypriot descent, remain missing and unaccounted for since the Turkish invasion. Sadly, since the invasion, churches, monasteries, and cultural artifacts have been destroyed, looted, vandalized, and illegally excavated. Many of these priceless items have been sold on the black market. Today, thirty-three years later, Turkey continues forcibly to occupy more than one-third of Cyprus with more than 43,000 Turkish troops. It is time for Turkey to remove its troops from the island so that Cyprus can move forward as one nation.

Just this month, we passed legislation introduced by my fellow co-chair, Representative GUS BILIRAKIS, which expresses the strong support of the House of Representatives for the implementation of the July 8, 2006, UN-brokered agreement between President of the Republic of Cyprus Tassos Papadopoulos and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat relating to the reunification of Cyprus. I believe that passage of this resolution will be a positive influence in moving this process forward in preparation for new comprehensive negotiations leading to the unification of Cyprus within a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation. Additionally, I have introduced H. Res. 407, which expresses the strong support of the House of Representatives for the positive actions by the Republic of Cyprus aimed at opening additional crossing points along the cease-fire line, thereby contributing to efforts for the reunification of the island.

The people of Cyprus, and Famagusta, deserve a unified and democratic country, and I remain hopeful that a peaceful settlement will be found so that the division of Cyprus will come to an end.

Once again, I want to acknowledge Mayor Galanos for being a tireless advocate on behalf of the exiled citizens of Famagusta

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISH-
MENTS OF ALVIN W. SMUZYSKI

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of myself and Representative TOM DAVIS, my distinguished colleague from Virginia, to recognize the accomplishments of Alvin W. Smuzynski Jr., upon his retirement as President and Chief Executive Officer of Wesley Housing Development Corporation of Northern Virginia.

Dedicated to increasing affordable housing in Northern Virginia, Mr. Smuzynski served as Commissioner on the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and as a Board member, Board Chairman, and President and CEO of Wesley Housing. Having spent nearly three decades expanding affordable housing, making rental properties available to low and moderate-income families in the metropolitan area was always at the top of Mr. Smuzynski's agenda.

Mr. Smuzynski led Wesley Housing admirably; he was a pioneer dedicated to ensuring

that entire communities throughout Northern Virginia would have the opportunity to acquire decent, affordable housing. During his tenure as President and CEO, more than half of the organization's 1,267 units were built or acquired. Under his leadership, Wesley Housing achieved the Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers' (HAND) 2006 Developer of the Year Award and Leadership Fairfax's Regional Leadership Award.

In 1999, under the direction of Mr. Smuzynski, the Wesley Agape House was completed. This 12-unit apartment house for individuals and children living with HIV/AIDS was the first project of this type in Northern Virginia. His advocacy efforts were essential to establishing a non-competitive tax credit pool for preservation projects in Northern Virginia. In 2005, his work with the Washington Metro Bankers' Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance resulted in the establishment of Fairfax County's innovative "Penny for Housing Fund." The trust fund supports preservation and development of affordable housing.

Always looking to lead the way, Mr. Smuzynski forged ahead on innovative projects. He built Northern Virginia's only barrier-free apartment community for low-income, severely physically disabled individuals—the 22-unit Coppermine Place I in Herndon. This award winning apartment community was selected as HAND's 2007 Best Project in Northern Virginia and the Accessible Design Award by the Coalition for Housing Opportunities in the Community for Everyone, Inc. (CHOICE) award.

Truly, Mr. Smuzynski's career has left behind a legacy of perseverance, innovation and numerous successes. He has earned the reputation over the years of being the leader in providing affordable housing, and will long be remembered for his dedication and commitment to Virginians. I wish all the best to him and his family in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO THE MARIN CON-
SERVATION CORPS ON ITS 25TH
ANNIVERSARY

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to salute the Marin Conservation Corps on its 25th anniversary of helping young people to a brighter future by providing jobs and learning opportunities, at the same time protecting and conserving our natural resources.

Marin Conservation Corps began more than 25 years ago when founder Richard Hammond was out jogging along one of the many gorgeous trails of the Marin Headlands. The father of teenage sons at the time, he had been seeking something productive to keep them occupied during summer vacation and came up with the idea to combine trail maintenance with young people's need for work. But it wasn't until devastating floods hit Marin in 1982 that the corps took shape.

The first local conservation corps in the country, MCC literally blazed the trail for others to follow. Workers have put in more than three million hours to maintain and conserve Marin County's 150,000 acres of public land. In association with AmeriCorps, MCC has